

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 30, 2007

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 9, 2007

SENATE BILL

No. 507

Introduced by Senator Torlakson

February 22, 2007

An act to add Chapter 6.95 (commencing with Section 52117) to Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to science instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 507, as amended, Torlakson. Schools: science instruction: grant program.

Existing law requires the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, to include instruction, beginning in grade 1 and continuing through grade 6, in the specified areas of study, including, but not limited to, science, including the biological and physical aspects, with emphasis on the processes of experimental inquiry and on the place of humans in ecological systems. The course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, also is required to include courses in science. Various programs are established to provide grants for enhanced educational opportunities for pupils.

This bill would establish the Science Instruction Augmentation Grant Program, to be administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The program would be required *require the Superintendent to provide award 25 grants from the General Fund, not to exceed \$2,000,000 in total to public school districts local educational agencies that maintain kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and to award 300 grants, not to exceed \$3,000,000 in total to local educational agencies that maintain grades 7 to 12, inclusive, for specified science education*

purposes and equipment. The Superintendent would be required to award grants pursuant to the program first to schools with ~~high poverty levels~~ *a high percentage of students living in poverty*, as described, and that meet certain other requirements. The bill would make the implementation of its provisions contingent upon the appropriation of funds for its purposes in the annual Budget Act or other statute.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) Due to the emphasis on math and reading in the curricula of
4 kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and the limited time in
5 the schoolday, science is taught in varying degrees in each
6 classroom in which those grades are taught.

7 (b) Academics agree that it is important to spark the interest of
8 pupils in science at an early age in order to develop curiosity and
9 critical thinking skills.

10 (c) The majority of the multisubject credentialed teachers of
11 kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, do not have a strong
12 academic background in science, are therefore less comfortable
13 with the material, and are less likely to place an emphasis on
14 science.

15 (d) Former astronaut Sally K. Ride formed the Sally Ride
16 Science Club to address the science, technology, engineering, and
17 mathematics (STEM) gender gap, the lack of women in STEM
18 professions.

19 (e) The National Center for Education Statistics reported in its
20 “Trends in Educational Equity of Girls & Women” in 2000 that
21 the percentages of girls interested in STEM careers decreases from
22 66 percent in grade 4 to 48 percent in grade 12.

23 (f) Studies show that improved teacher knowledge and training
24 results in increased pupil learning and success.

25 SEC. 2. Chapter 6.95 (commencing with Section 52117) is
26 added to Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code,
27 to read:

1 CHAPTER 6.95. SCIENCE INSTRUCTION AUGMENTATION GRANT
2 PROGRAM
3

4 52117. (a) The Science Instruction Augmentation Grant
5 Program is hereby established and shall be administered by the
6 Superintendent.

7 (b) The program shall provide grants to public school districts
8 that maintain kindergarten or any of grades 1 to-8 12, inclusive,
9 for the purposes of providing greater access to science education
10 and promoting knowledge, curiosity, creativity, critical thinking,
11 and interest in all aspects of science.

12 (c) Funds apportioned pursuant to this article shall supplement
13 and not supplant existing expenditures by the local educational
14 agencies receiving grants.

15 (d) To be eligible to receive a grant under this article, a
16 representative of the applicant local educational agency shall certify
17 that an annual program audit will be conducted and that adequate,
18 accurate records will be maintained. In addition, each applicant
19 shall provide the Superintendent with the assurance that grant
20 funds received pursuant to this article will be expended only for
21 the purposes for which they are granted. The Superintendent shall
22 require grant recipients to submit annual budget reports, and the
23 Superintendent may withhold funds in subsequent years if grant
24 funds are expended for purposes other than as awarded.

25 (e) The implementation of this article is contingent upon the
26 appropriation of funds for its purposes in the annual Budget Act
27 or other statute.

28 ~~52118. (a) A grant awarded pursuant to this article shall be~~
29 ~~used to provide greater access to, and promote interest in, science~~
30 ~~education at the elementary and middle school levels and for~~
31 ~~purposes, including, but not limited to, bringing traveling science~~
32 ~~programs to the school district and employing traveling science~~
33 ~~teachers to teach at a number of schools in the district.~~

34 ~~(b) The Superintendent shall award grants pursuant to this~~
35 ~~section based upon the following criteria:~~

36 ~~(1) First, to local educational agencies with schools that have a~~
37 ~~high number of teachers providing instruction in science education~~
38 ~~who are either new to the teaching profession or who do not hold~~
39 ~~clear credentials in science education, and that have high poverty~~

1 levels, as determined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free
2 or reduced-price meals.

3 52118. (a) *The Superintendent shall award 25 grants from the*
4 *General Fund, not to exceed two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in*
5 *total, to various local education agencies that maintain*
6 *kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, for the purposes*
7 *of hiring traveling science teachers and purchasing science*
8 *equipment that the teacher would require to provide science*
9 *education.*

10 (b) *For purposes of this section:*

11 (1) *“Traveling science teacher” means a teacher that travels*
12 *from classroom to classroom, school to school, district to district,*
13 *or any combination thereof, to provide science activities and*
14 *instruction to elementary school students, and is dedicated solely*
15 *to the teaching of science to elementary school pupils. A traveling*
16 *science teacher may hold a single-subject preliminary or*
17 *professional clear credential in science; a multiple-subject*
18 *preliminary or professional clear credential with an academic or*
19 *industrial background in science; or a multiple-subject preliminary*
20 *or professional clear credential. A traveling science teacher*
21 *holding a preliminary credential must be a participant in a*
22 *certification program toward a professional clear credential and*
23 *must receive that credential no more than three years after the*
24 *date he or she enters a classroom to comply with the federal No*
25 *Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.).*

26 (2) *“Science equipment” means any equipment appropriate to*
27 *teaching the science content standards and particularly the*
28 *experimentation and investigation standards, including, but not*
29 *limited to, measuring devices, balances, scales, containers,*
30 *microscopes, and magnifiers for use in science education*
31 *instruction. Funds may not be used to purchase textbooks.*

32 (c) *The Superintendent shall award grants based upon the*
33 *following criteria:*

34 (1) *First, to local educational agencies with schools that have*
35 *a high percentage of students living in poverty, as determined by*
36 *the percentage of pupils eligible for free or reduced-price meals.*

37 (2) *Second, to all other local educational agencies that apply*
38 *for funds.*

39 (e)

1 (d) The Superintendent shall require the recipient local
2 educational agency to provide a ~~percentage~~ 50 percent match of
3 its own funds to be used for purposes of this section, which may
4 come from any public or private source, based on the amount of
5 funds apportioned and the financial means of the local educational
6 agency.

7 ~~(d)~~

8 (e) Funds apportioned pursuant to this section shall be used for
9 ~~purposes of hiring teachers who hold clear single subject~~
10 ~~credentials in science education.~~ *for the purposes set forth in*
11 *subdivision (a).*

12 ~~(e)~~

13 (f) Local educational agencies that are selected to receive grants
14 pursuant to this section are eligible to continue to receive grant
15 awards on an ongoing basis in subsequent fiscal years to the extent
16 that the agency continues to ~~a demonstrate need~~ *demonstrate the*
17 *need* for the funds awarded according to ~~subdivisions (a) and (b)~~
18 *this section.*

19 ~~52119. (a) The Superintendent shall award grants to local~~
20 ~~educational agencies to purchase science laboratory equipment for~~
21 ~~science laboratory instruction based upon the following criteria:~~

22 ~~(1) First, to local educational agencies with schools with high~~
23 ~~poverty levels, as determined by the percentage of pupils eligible~~
24 ~~for free or reduced price meals.~~

25 ~~(2) Second, to all other local educational agencies that apply~~
26 ~~for funds.~~

27 ~~(b) The Superintendent shall require the recipient local~~
28 ~~educational agency to provide a percentage match of its own funds~~
29 ~~to be used for purposes of this section, which may come from any~~
30 ~~public or private source based on the amount of funds apportioned~~
31 ~~and the financial means of the local educational agency.~~

32 ~~(c) Funds apportioned pursuant to this section shall be used for~~
33 ~~purposes of purchasing science laboratory equipment appropriate~~
34 ~~to teaching to the science content standards, including, but not~~
35 ~~limited to, digital measurement devices, probeware, and laboratory~~
36 ~~glassware. Funds may not be used to purchase textbooks.~~

37 ~~(d) Local educational agencies that are selected to receive grants~~
38 ~~pursuant to this section are eligible to continue to receive grant~~
39 ~~awards on an ongoing basis in subsequent fiscal years to the extent~~

1 ~~that they continue to demonstrate the need for the funds awarded~~
2 ~~according to subdivisions (a) and (b).~~

3 52119. (a) *The Superintendent shall award 300 grants from*
4 *the General Fund, not to exceed three million dollars (\$3,000,000)*
5 *in total, to local educational agencies that maintain grades 7 to*
6 *12, inclusive, to purchase science laboratory equipment for science*
7 *laboratory instruction.*

8 (b) *For purposes of this section, “science laboratory equipment”*
9 *means equipment appropriate to teaching the science content*
10 *standards, including, but not limited to, digital measurement*
11 *devices, probeware, and laboratory glassware. Funds may not be*
12 *used to purchase textbooks.*

13 (c) *The Superintendent shall award grants based upon the*
14 *following criteria:*

15 (1) *First, to local educational agencies with schools that have*
16 *a high percentage of students living in poverty, as determined by*
17 *the percentage of pupils eligible for free or reduced-price meals.*

18 (2) *Second, to all other local educational agencies that apply*
19 *for funds.*

20 (d) *The Superintendent shall require the recipient local*
21 *educational agency to provide a 50 percent match of its own funds*
22 *to be used for purposes of this section, which may come from any*
23 *public or private source, based on the amount of funds apportioned*
24 *and the financial means of the local educational agency.*

25 (e) *Funds apportioned pursuant to this section shall be used for*
26 *the purposes set forth in subdivision (a).*

27 (f) *Local educational agencies that are selected to receive grants*
28 *pursuant to this section are eligible to continue to receive grant*
29 *awards on an ongoing basis in subsequent fiscal years to the extent*
30 *that they continue to demonstrate the need for the funds awarded*
31 *according to this section.*

32 (g) *Local educational agencies that are selected to receive*
33 *grants pursuant to this section shall submit an annual report of*
34 *the sources and amount of matching funds provided and the*
35 *equipment purchased.*